

Office of
the Mayor
Burlington,
Vermont



Bob Kiss
Mayor
Room 34, City Hall
Burlington, VT 05401
Tel: (802) 865-7272
Fax: (802) 865-7270
TDD: (802) 865-7142

**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact:

Joe Reinert
Assistant to the Mayor
865-7275

**MAYOR KISS VETOES CHARTER CHANGE PROPOSAL ON DEPARTMENT HEAD
APPOINTMENT, REAPPOINTMENT, AND REMOVAL**

Burlington, VT – October 18, 2010. Burlington Mayor Bob Kiss today vetoed a City Council resolution proposing a charter change to the appointment, reappointment and removal process for City department heads. The resolution, which passed at the October 6 Council meeting, proposes to eliminate the Council's annual vote on department head reappointments, change the standard for removal of a department head, and give Councilors unilateral authority to remove a department head as well as initiate removal proceedings (see <http://www.ci.burlington.vt.us/docs/2646.pdf>). The current process in the Charter requires the Mayor to initiate removal of a department head, which must then be approved by the Council.

Mayor Kiss's veto is based on changes to the removal process. "Vetoing a Council resolution is something I take very seriously," said Mayor Kiss. "This is only the second time in 4 ½ years I've taken such action. This proposed charter change is unwarranted and unwise. I'm concerned it is based on short-term considerations and not the long-term interests of the City."

"Removal of a City department manager should be a joint responsibility of the Mayor and Council. The lines of authority should be consistent and clear in the City, as it should be in any business or organization. This proposed charter change will be detrimental to efficient and effective City operations. City government needs a measure of stability especially at times when difficult issues arise. This threatens to undermine the many successes that Burlington has accomplished over the last 30 years. I hope members of the Council will reconsider these proposed changes."

The full text of Mayor's Kiss's veto message can be found at:
<http://www.ci.burlington.vt.us/docs/2708.pdf>.

Managers of the following Departments are subject to the appointment, reappointment, and removal process in the current city charter: Airport; Assessor; City Attorney's Office; Burlington City Arts; Burlington Electric Department; Clerk-Treasurer's Office; Church Street Marketplace; Community & Economic Development Office; Fire Department; Human Resources; Fletcher Free Library; Parks and Recreation; Police Department; and Department of Public Works.

The Director of Planning and Zoning and the School Superintendent are not part of this process. Those positions are appointed by, respectively, the Planning Commission and School Board.